Facts About COVID-19 Vaccines

FACT: COVID-19 vaccines will not give you COVID-19

None of the COVID-19 vaccines currently in development or in use in the U.S., contain the live virus that causes COVID-19. There are several different types of vaccines in development; however, the goal for each of them is to teach our immune systems how to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19. Sometimes this process can cause symptoms, such as fever. These symptoms are normal and are a sign that the body is building immunity. It typically takes a few weeks for the body to build immunity after vaccination. That means it's possible a person could be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 just before or just after vaccination and get sick. This is because the vaccine has not had enough time to provide protection.

FACT: COVID-19 vaccines will not cause you to test positive on COVID-19 viral tests

Neither the recently authorized and recommended vaccines nor the other COVID-19 vaccines currently in clinical trials in the U.S. cause you to test positive on **viral tests**, which are used to see if you have a **current infection**.

FACT: People who have gotten sick with COVID-19 may still benefit from getting vaccinated

Due to the severe health risks associated with COVID-19 and the fact that re-infection with COVID-19 is possible, people may be advised to get a COVID-19 vaccine even if they have been sick with COVID-19 before. At this time, experts do not know how long someone is protected from getting sick again after recovering from COVID-19. The immunity someone gains from having an infection, called natural immunity, varied from person to person. Some early evidence suggests natural immunity may not last very long.

FACT: Getting vaccinated can help prevent getting sick with COVID-19

While many people with COVID-19 have only a mild illness, others may get a severe illness or they may even die. There is no way to know how COVID-19 will affect you, even if you are not at increased risk of severe complications. If you get

sick, you also may spread the disease to friends, family, and others around you while you are sick.

FACT: Receiving an mRNA vaccine will not alter your DNA

mRNA stands for “messenger ribonucleic acid” and can most easily be described as instructions for how to make a protein or even just a piece of a protein. mRNA is not able to alter or modify a person’s genetic makeup (DNA). The mRNA from a COVID-19 vaccine never enter the nucleus of the cell, which is where our DNA are kept. This means the mRNA does not affect or interact with our DNA is any way. Instead, COVID-19 vaccines that use mRNA work with the body’s natural defenses to safely develop protection (immunity) to disease.

This information is provided by the Dickinson County Health Department from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/vaccine-benefits/facts.html

Getting Vaccinated Against COVID-19

1. **How many shots of COVID-19 vaccine will be needed?**
   The two authorized and recommended vaccines to prevent COVID-19 in the U.S. both need two shots to be effective. There is one COVID-19 vaccine in Phase 3 clinical trials in the U.S. that uses one shot.

2. **Do I need to wear a mask when I receive a COVID-19 vaccine?**
   Yes. (Anyone who has trouble breathing or is unable to remove a mask without assistance should not wear a mask.)

3. **If I have already had COVID-19 and recovered, do I still need to get vaccinated with a COVID-19 vaccine when it's available?** Yes. COVID-19 vaccination should be offered to you regardless of whether you already had COVID-19 infection. Anyone currently infected with COVID-19 should wait to get vaccinated until after their illness has resolved and after they have met the criteria to discontinue isolation. Current evidence suggests that reinfection with the virus that causes COVID-19 is uncommon in the 90 days after initial infection. Therefore, people with a recent infection may delay vaccination until the end of that 90-day period is desired.

4. **Why would a vaccine be needed if we can do other things, like social distancing and wearing masks, to prevent the virus that causes COVID-19 from spreading?** Stopping a pandemic requires using all the tools available. Vaccines work with your immune system so your body will be ready to fight the virus if you are exposed. Other steps, like covering your mouth and nose with a mask and staying at least 6 feet away from others, help reduce your chance of being exposed to the virus or spreading it to others. Together, COVID-19 vaccination and following CDC's recommendations to protect yourself and others will offer the best protection from COVID-19.
5. **Do I need to wear a mask and avoid close contact with others if I have received 2 doses of the vaccine?** Yes. While experts learn more about the protection that COVID-19 vaccines provide under real-life conditions, it will be important for everyone to continue using all the tools available to us to

help stop this pandemic, like covering your mouth and nose with a mask, washing hands often, and staying at least 6 feet away from others.

6. **When can I stop wearing a mask and avoiding close contact with others after I have been vaccinated?** There is not enough information currently available to say if or when CDC will stop recommending that people wear masks and avoid close contact with others to help prevent the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19. Experts need to understand more about the protection that COVID-19 vaccines provide before making that decision.

7. **Does immunity after getting COVID-19 last longer than protection from COVID-19 vaccines?**
   The protection someone gains from having an infection (called natural immunity) varies depending on the disease, and it varies from person to person. Since this virus is new, we don't know how long natural immunity might last. Current evidence suggests that reinfection with the virus that causes COVID-19 is uncommon in the 90 days after initial infection.

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https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/faq.html#Getting

Benefits of Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine

1. **COVID-19 vaccination will help keep you from getting COVID-19.**
   All COVID-19 vaccines currently available in the U.S. have been shown to be highly effective at preventing COVID-19. All COVID-19 vaccines that are in development are being carefully evaluated in clinical trials and will be authorized or approved only if they make it substantially less likely you'll get COVID-19.

2. **COVID-19 vaccination is a safer way to help build protection.**
   COVID-19 can have serious, life-threatening complications, and there is no way to know how COVID-19 will affect you. If you get sick, you could spread the disease to friends, family, and others around you. Clinical trials of all vaccines must first show they are safe and effective before they can be authorized or approved for use, including COVID-19 vaccines.

3. **COVID-19 vaccination will be an important tool to help stop the pandemic.**
   Wearing masks and social distancing help reduce your chance of being exposed to the virus or spreading it to others, but these measures are not enough. Vaccines will work with your immune system so it will be ready to fight the virus if you are exposed. The combination of getting vaccinated and following CDC's recommendations to protect yourself and others will offer the best protection from COVID-19.

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